

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A point of purchase research device comprising:  
a housing having a user surface and a mounting surface, wherein  
the mounting surface is adapted to cooperate with a store  
shelf;  
a display device affixed adjacent to the user surface and  
communicatively connected to a user input device;  
a control unit having a processor, wherein the control unit is  
communicatively connected to the display device and the  
user input device; and  
a control routine executed on the processor and configured to  
control the display device to gather at least one piece  
consumer information from the user input device.
2. The research device of claim 1 further comprising a thermal printer.
3. The research device of claim 2, wherein the thermal printer prints a  
reward in response to the gathered consumer specific information.
4. The research device of claim 1 further comprising a reader adapted  
to read the at least one piece of consumer information.
5. The research device of claim 4, wherein the reader is a combination  
barcode and magnetic strip reader.
6. The research device of claim 4, wherein the reader is a radio  
frequency identification tag reader.

7. The research device of claim 1 further comprising a network interface communicatively connected to the processor.
8. The research device of claim 7, wherein the network interface is a cellular communications device.
9. The research device of claim 7, wherein the network interface is a powered local area network interface to the control unit and display device.
10. The research device of claim 1 further comprising at least one solar cell adapted to provide electrical power and communicatively connected to the display device and the control unit.
11. The research device of claim 1, wherein the control routine is configured to gather consumer specific information by presenting a first question on the display device and receiving an input from the user input device.
12. The research device of claim 11, wherein the control routine is configured to gather consumer specific information by presenting a second question based on the input received in response to the first question.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein the control routine is configured to display a customized advertising message based on gathered consumer information.

14. A point of purchase research system comprising:  
at least one research device mountable adjacent to a store shelf,  
wherein the at least one research device includes:  
a display communicatively coupled to a control unit having a  
processor, wherein the processor executes a control  
routine configured to interactively gather consumer  
specific information using a user input device;  
a network interface device for connecting the at least one  
research device to a data network; and  
a first database connected to the data network and configured to  
receive the gathered consumer specific information.
15. The system of claim 14 further comprising a second database  
communicatively connected to the data network.
16. The system of claim 14, wherein the research device further  
comprises a reader configured to read the at least one piece of user  
specific information.
17. The research device of claim 16, wherein the reader is a  
combination barcode and magnetic strip reader.
18. The research device of claim 16, wherein the reader is a radio  
frequency identification tag reader.
19. The research device of claim 14 further comprising a thermal  
printer adapted to provide a reward in response to gathered  
consumer specific information.

20. The research device of claim 14, wherein the user input device is a plurality of button communicatively connected to the control unit.
21. The research device of claim 14, wherein the user input device is a touchpad or trackball communicatively connected to the control unit.
22. The research device of claim 14 further comprising at least one solar cell adapted to provide electrical power to the at least one research device.
23. The research device of claim 14, wherein the network interface device is a cellular communications device.
24. A method of gathering point of purchase information, the method comprising:
  - positioning a research device having an integrated display adjacent to a store shelf;
  - displaying an interactive survey on the integrate display;
  - gathering user information through responses to the interactive survey;
  - communicating the responses to a first database through a data network; and
  - providing a reward in response to the completion of the interactive survey.
25. The method of claim 24, wherein providing the reward includes providing a coupon using a thermal printer integral to the research device.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein gathering the user information further includes gathering consumer information using a reader integrated into the research device.
27. The method of claim 26, wherein displaying the interactive survey includes customizing the interactive survey based on the gathered consumer information.
28. The method of claim 24 further including communicating the responses and consumer information to a second database.
29. The method of claim 24, wherein displaying an interactive survey includes displaying customized advertising based on gathered consumer information.
30. The method of claim 24 further comprising:  
gathering user purchasing information and communicating the user purchasing information to the first database through the data network.
31. The method of claim 30 further comprising:  
correlating user purchasing information in the first database with the gathered responses in the first database.

32. A point of purchase research device comprising:
  - a housing having a mounting portion;
  - a display device affixed within the housing and communicatively connected to a user input device;
  - a processor communicatively connected to the display device and the user input device; and
  - a memory communicatively connected to the processor and adapted to store a control routine configured to gather consumer information from the user input device.
33. The point of purchase device of claim 32, wherein the mounting portion is adapted to secure the housing to a shopping cart.
34. The point of purchase device of claim 32, wherein the mounting portion is adapted to secure the housing to an end cap.
35. The point of purchase device of claim 32, wherein the mounting portion is adapted to secure the housing to a freestanding kiosk.
36. The point of purchase device of claim 32, further comprising a wireless network interface.
37. The point of purchase device of claim 32, wherein the display device is a touchscreen display.
38. The point of purchase device of claim 32, wherein the touchscreen display is a touchscreen computer.